

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora



Strengthening regional and international cooperation to combat illegal trade in wildlife

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Illegal trade in wildlife is a serious crime

- Despite considerable efforts to combat illegal trade in wildlife, it continues to escalate.
- Threatens some mega-fauna, such as elephants, and high-value flora, such as rosewood, but also many lesser known species, such as pangolins, turtles and tortoises, birds, reptiles and others.
- It is a serious crime.
- A global problem, that cannot be combated effectively by one country or agency alone.



Illegal trade in wildlife is a serious crime

- It is not about local subsistence poaching. Today we are confronted by transnational organized crime groups, and in some cases rebel militia, which are driving industrial scale poaching and illegal trade. Clear indications that organized criminal groups are involved.



What is the challenge?

Different levels in the structure of organized crime groups involved in illegal trade in wildlife.

For this reason strong collaboration across range transit and destination States are essential.



What do we need to do?

1. *Assess progress* – what's been done and where are the gaps?
2. *Identify priorities* – what do we need to do?
3. *Enhance implementation* – how can we strengthen existing efforts and interventions?
4. *Secure commitment* – secure political support.



What can be done?

- Recognize illegal trade in wild fauna and flora as a serious crime and identify it as a matter of high priority for national law enforcement agencies.
- Adequate legal frameworks and sanctions for infringements that are appropriate to their nature and gravity.
- Establish inter-agency committees to promote effective coordination between governmental agencies.



What can be done?

- Carry out focused national and regional capacity-building activities with particular focus on fostering inter-agency cooperation and improving knowledge of legislation; intelligence-driven investigations; species identification and risk analysis.
- Increase cross border collaboration between law enforcement agencies in source, transit and destination countries to detect, deter and prevent illicit trade in wildlife through the exchange of intelligence, technical advice and support.



What can be done?

- Formulate national and regional action plans, incorporating timetables, targets and provisions for funding.
- Promote and increase the use of wildlife forensic technology and specialized investigation techniques, such as controlled deliveries, in the investigation of wildlife crime offences.
- Consider the development of appropriate cooperation mechanisms to increase international cooperation, for example Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs).



What can be done?

- Promote the use of formal requests for Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA).
- When appropriate, use bilateral agreements on mutual administrative assistance in Customs matters to facilitate investigations into illegal trade in wildlife.
- Ensure that all relevant information is shared with countries of origin, transit and destination of the seized specimens for follow-up investigations to be conducted



What can be done?

- Initiate targeted intelligence-driven bilateral, trilateral, sub-regional, regional or international operations.
- Consider conducting study visits between countries when significant volumes or trends of illegal trade in wildlife between such countries are identified.
- Consider the secondment of law enforcement officers to identified countries or regions.



CITES response

In recognition of the severity of the problem, CITES Parties have adopted:



Decisions at CoP16



Recommendations at SC65



Strategies and proposed actions - CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force



Decisions / Recommendations/ Strategies and proposed actions

The strategic and operational decisions and recommendations taken on enforcement matters by CITES Parties:

- provide a strong basis for Parties to take concrete action to put an end to the current high levels of illegal wildlife trade.
- For these decisions and recommendations to be effective broad overall implementation is needed.

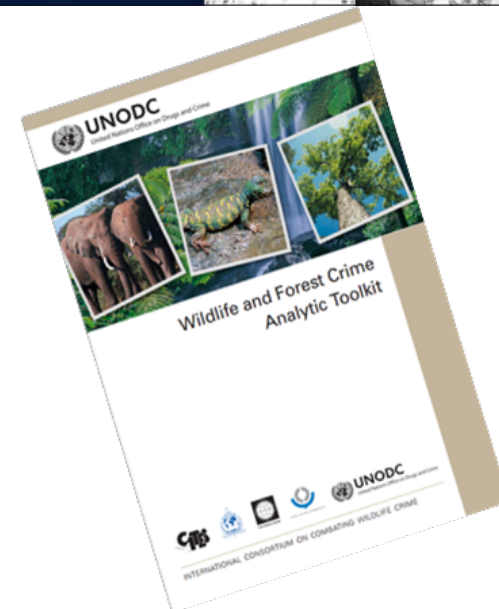
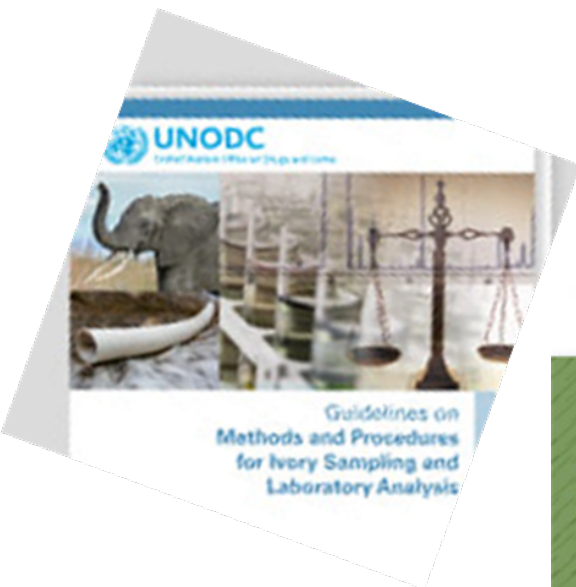


International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCW) - coordinated action to combat wildlife crime

- The establishment of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCW) recognize the need for increased coordination and cooperation and mark a significant development in this regard.



ICCWC activites



Conclusion

No country or region can fight illegal trade in wildlife on its own. It is crucial that we combine our collective energy to solve the problem, by working together across the entire illegal supply chain – source, transit and destination States.



Thank you

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